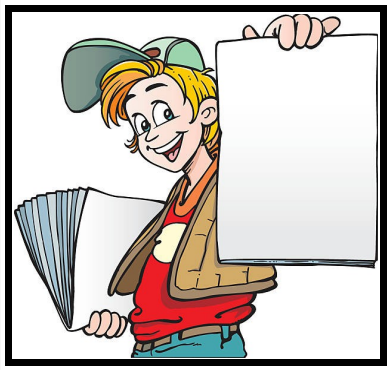

WEST VIRGINIA SPLATTER

AUGUST 2024

WHY “73”

Early telegraphers found they were sending the same messages over and over. Often meant for other operators handling traffic. This messages included things like “wait” or A”Are you ready to copy?” So, they developed a shorthand by assigning a number to a common message. One became “Wait a minute.” “Are you ready?” was assigned the number 6. This system became standard in 1857 when it was published in “The National Telegraphic Review Operators Guide” By the way, this guide lists the number 73 as “My love to you”.

In 1859 the Western Union Company established the “92 Code”.In it 73 changed from “My love to you” to “accept my compliments”. Another source defines 73 as “compliments”. In another it became “my compliments to you”. The 1908 Dodge Manual gives two definitions, “compliments” and the one it has today,“best regards”.

73 continues to change. Some QRP operators, those who use less than 5 watts of power, sign off with “72”. 72 is less than 73 isn't-it? This use of 72 began in the early 1900s.

While “best regards” might be the formal definition of 73, it is frequently used more casually today. We're not just saying goodbye, but also “thanks” and “hope to talk to you again soon.”

GOTA STATION BEING USED AT THE KARC 2024 FIELD DAY

WVAR MONTHLY EXAMS

Amateur Radio license examination are offered monthly by West Virginia Amateur Radio, Inc., at the CAMC Teays Valley Hospital in Hurricane, WV. Sessions are held on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM. ***A reservation is required by the first day of the month.*** The remaining 2024 examinations are scheduled for August 8, September 12, October 10, November 14 and December 12.

To reserve a seat email Mike Maxson at maxson@suddenlink.net. Include your full name and call sign if you are upgrading your license, and the exam level(s) you want to take. You will receive a confirmation email with the information you will need before the exam.

"Oh my God, it's a Girl!!"
GUEST COLUMN by Sheri L. Hicks, KD8RXM

Growing up in a military family, I got to see and hear a lot. My mother did short wave radio, my father had whatever communications training the Marines had then. I thought it was cool but I didn't get involved. I would watch my mom talk on this gray machine at home, and on a bigger machine at work. Dad unfortunately was in Vietnam.

It wasn't till the 70's that I got into CB radio. My Uncle gave me my handle, Rinky Dink (it means "troublemaker" or "trouble's coming", take your pick). Next I got on Side Band, upper and lower side of it. Mom had me use my CB call sign handle along with my handle. I wish I could remember that call sign.

I lost interest in radio after I became involved with theater. I went to work right after high school. Most of my side interests went by the wayside. I had no time to spare. I really missed using the CB radio my grandmother still operated.

The era of the cellular phones started. I noticed the changes happening. People stopped using radios to call for EMS, to call in information or to report something that other folks needed to know about. Alerts were sent out via cellular service. I didn't think that was good.

It took my turn in the Army. I enlisted to fill the need for communications. The news talked about the lack of comms allowing this unit or that unit to be taken out. Kuwait was getting hot real fast. Unfortunately, I didn't get past Basic Training. I still had the growing concern for current events and how we lacked emergency communications.

Girl Scouts allowed me to express the need for communications of all sorts, not just the cell phone. I talked about radio in EMS, First Responders and those who would head things up in an emergency. Only problem was, they wanted cellular phone use, not radio. Since amateur radio wasn't big in my area, no one knew much about it. Nothing like an amateur radio club existed. Radio got ignored for the longest time.

A solar storm powered through, hitting most of the North East, Western New York included. I watched people trying to figure out why their cell phones wouldn't work. I had an inkling the cause was the magnetic storm. More and more cell phones were being used, even I had one. The market was flooded with Android phones, iPhones and Crickets. At the same time solar activity was becoming more noticeable.

What would happen if a major storm hit again and took out more than just upper signals? I figured we would all be screwed. Except those who used HAM radios. It occurred to me that maybe I should try for radio. However, there was no one to talk to except my husband. I soon lost interest.

I saw a great need for hams. Our weather was going nuts. I got a radio and was learning to use it, I even used my husband's call sign before I got my own. Getting in with weather watchers, I saw more need. There were and are places that simply do not have cell service.

"Oh my god, there's a girl talking on the radio!!" Honestly I was prepared for a lot of derogatory comments. Not a one was heard. Hubby kept encouraging me, so did other hams. More solar storms, more extreme flares were happening. Again, what would happen if we lost all of our high tech comms?

Being a ham lets me help fill a need. Now it's my turn to encourage other girls, other ladies to become involved. It's important to keep radio communications for a variety of reasons. It's important for more of us to be amateur radio operators and it's important to encourage kids to get with radio as well. It will only take one megamagnetic storm to wipe out our communication satellites and we lose EMS, telecommuncations across the board, basic phone service as well. All that will be left is amateur radio.

"Oh my god, it's a girl talking on the radio!"; yep and there will be one from now on.

CONGRATULATIONS

Splatter offers our congratulations to **David Poe, W8IW** and **Terry Sanner, WV8V** for being named to the ARRL VEC VOLUNTEER EXAMINERS HONOR ROLL. David has participated in 213 examination sessions. Terry in 254!

This places them in the top ten VEs in the Roanoke Division.

TRI-STATE HAMFEST

TARA will be holding their annual ham fest on August 10th at the New Baptist Church, 610 28th Street, Huntington WV 25701.

For more information contact Teresa Killen, KD8GIH at 740-550-3811 or at tkillen31@gmail.com.

The Talk In frequency is 146.760.

FEMA INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSES

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides training in Emergency Preparedness, Response, Mitigation and Recovery for professionals and volunteers who might be involved in emergency situations. Much of this training is by way of FREE Independent Study courses over the internet. (Search FEMA INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSE LIST for the current courses available.)

For Amateur Radio Operators who are interested in ARES or RACES the primary courses are:

- IS 100 – Introduction to the Incident Command System,
- IS 200 – Basic Incident Command System for Emergency Response,
- IS 700 – An Introduction to the National Incident Management System, and
- IS 800 – National Response Network, An Introduction.

These four courses are required for anyone who works in an Emegency Operation Center during an disaster. They are also prerequisites for taking the WV Auxiliary Communications (Aux Comm) course. Before an Aux Comm Course can be scheduled, there must be at least 10 people signed up to attend who have completed these four Independent Study Courses. It is important to point out that FEMA will NOT teach you how to operate a radio, they will teach you how the different levels of government will interact during an emergency.

In addition to these four courses, I found a number of other FEMA Independent Study Courses to be interesting and informative. Look them up and see if there is something you might like!

KARC FIELD DAY 2024 CARRYING THE BEAM TO THE TOWER

CRAM COURSE IN SEPTEMBER

I know it's early but I had this space to fill.

KARC Volunteer Examiners will be conducting a FREE Technician Level Cram Course at 8:00 AM on September 21, 2024 at the Trinity Lutheran Church, 1600 Kanawha E, Charleston WV 25311.

Examinations for all levels will be offered after a break for lunch. Check next months Splatter for more details. A Cram Course helped me get my first license.

LOCAL NETS

Sundays at 8:00pm
KARES net on 145.350 PL tone 91.5

Sundays at 8:30pm
KARC net on 145.350 PL tone 91.5

Sunday at 7:00 PM
Northern Panhandle Amateur Radio Club Sunday night digital net 441.825

Tuesday at 8:30 P.M.
WV8AR - 147.270 PL tone 123.0

Thursday 8:00 P.M.
441.825 WV-Link Room 46488
Hot spots use US-WV-LINK (19941)

Saturday 10:00 AM
Ohio Valley ARES Net 441.825

MEETINGS

KARC Will meet on August 2nd

The Trinity Blvd. Lutheran Church
1600 Kanawha E
Charleston WV 25311
Greetings @ 6:00pm - Meeting @ 6:30pm

WV8AR Will meet on August 12th

CAMC Teays Valley
1400 Hospital Drive
Hurricane, WV 25526
Education Room at 7PM

Kanawha ARES Will meet on August 15th

Kanawha County 911 Center
100 Peyton Way (Off Corridor G)
Charleston, WV
Meeting @ 6:00 pm

The expression "Hammer-Down"

Early hams had to construct and maintain their own equipment. In those days, it was common to see a pole pig and other transformers in the corner of a ham's shack with wires running all over the place to supply the enormous current necessary to light the filaments and supply the voltage to the quart sized vacuum tubes used in their radios and transmitters.

It was not a foregone conclusion that their transmitters would fire when it came their turn to talk. Therefore, when they activated their exciters, those contacts sounded like hammers. If all went well their tubes glowed like mercury vapor lights. It was an exhilarating experience as the large tubes did their job.

So, when the transmitter was in operation they would talk their F.C.C. allotted time before releasing the key. The phrase "While I have the hammer down," was commonplace and meant something. There are those hams in operation today that have accepted and mimic the practice of talking their full allotment of time with our a break from association with old time hams of verbose conversation practices. This is not bad or nefarious but it isn't like eye to eye conversation with them personally or conversation with others on the radio who grew up in the age of off the shelf VOX operated equipment or even push-to-talk..

I sincerely hope everyone enjoys this bit of nostalgia. See you on the radio.

Leon, WD8POF

Hal Turley, W8HC will be the guest on WWSA (96.9 FM) Lunch Time Live radio program on Wednesday, July 24, 2024 at noon. The program can be heard later that day over the internet at WWSARadio.com. Click on Previously Recorded.

To place an article in future issues of Splatter, contact Jim Hudson, KE8PNY at nettlescreek@frontier.com.